

# SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT  
2017-2018



Department of Aging  
and Adult Services

Santa Clara County  
Social Services Agency

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## DEFEATING MALNUTRITION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, INNOVATION, AND BEST PRACTICES

The Senior Nutrition Program aims to improve access to food for older adults in Santa Clara County. We look to national trends and best practices to ensure that our actions are backed by evidence-based research. The National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Program has set the stage for local nutrition providers and, as partners in this national effort, we are focusing on malnutrition prevention, leveraging partnerships, and data-driven decision making to improve our services.

Last year was a year of learning and improving. A congregate meal Request for Proposal was released this year, encouraging partners to submit new, innovative models. Through the support of these partnerships, we will offer a weekend evening meal at a low-income older adult housing complex, explore partnerships to offer restaurant meals, and we increased weekend meal programs.

We are thankful for the opportunity to provide services in the community, with the constant support of Community Based Organizations. These organizations provide meals and support services despite the increasing cost of personnel, food, and cost of living. We want to acknowledge these groups and thank them for their unwavering support of older adults in Santa Clara County.

In the future, we will foster and support data driven decision making, increase access to food across the County, and learn about new ways to increase sustainability across all of our work. We are building outcome measures that can track health improvement over time and releasing the home-delivered meal program Request for Proposal. This will offer organizations the data to support the submission of progressive proposals that will offer much needed updates to the program.

We are looking forward to working in true partnership in the year to come.

Sincerely,

**Vanessa Merlano**

**Trisha Lam**

**Vandana Puri**

**Aiysha Ahmed**

**Lindsey Tsai**

**Jennifer Kelly**

**Belay Tessema**

**Lilia Roxas**

**Marilyn Picard**

**Dieuly Nguyen**

**Duane Gott**

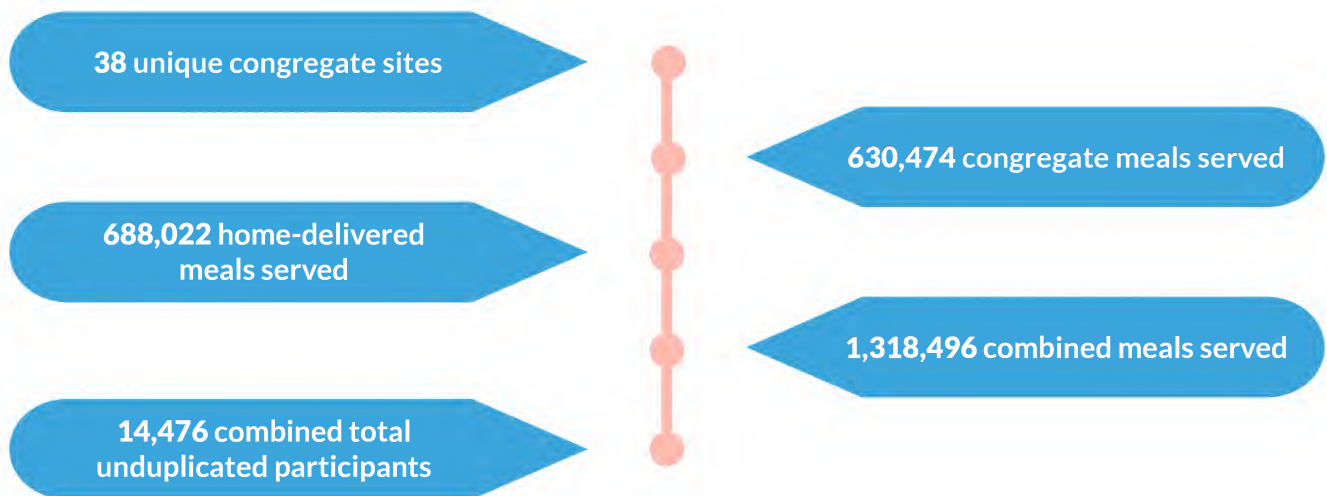
**Stella Lu**

**Elizabeth Tae**

## SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Senior Nutrition Program (SNP) has provided meals to eligible adults 60 years of age and older in Santa Clara County since 1974. The goals of the program are to reduce hunger and food insecurity, increase socialization, and promote the health and well-being of older adults by improving access to nutritious meals and other health and wellness services. A variety of programs offered through the SNP help support older adults aging where they want to age. They include the Congregate Meals Program, Meals on Wheels, Friends from Meals on Wheels, and the Mobility Management program.

### AT-A-GLANCE



### Mobility Management



**1,445**

Shared Rides Gas Cards



**16,475**

One-way Rides



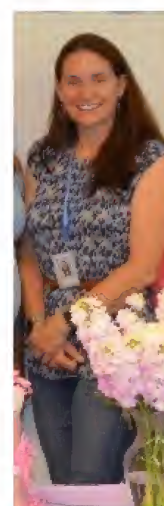
**7,286**

Monthly Bus Passes



## WELCOMING NEW STAFF

Three new staff members joined SNP this year. Our new Accountant III, Belay Tessema, comes to us from the City and County of San Francisco where he worked as a Principal Accountant. He handles accounts payable, accounts receivable and purchasing. Jennifer Kelly joined us from another Social Services Agency program as a Senior Management Analyst and works on contract development and monitoring legislative files, budgets, data reporting, and site administrative support. Aiysha Ahmed joined us as a Managing Dietitian and comes to us from the Health and Hospital system.



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Congregate Meal Program

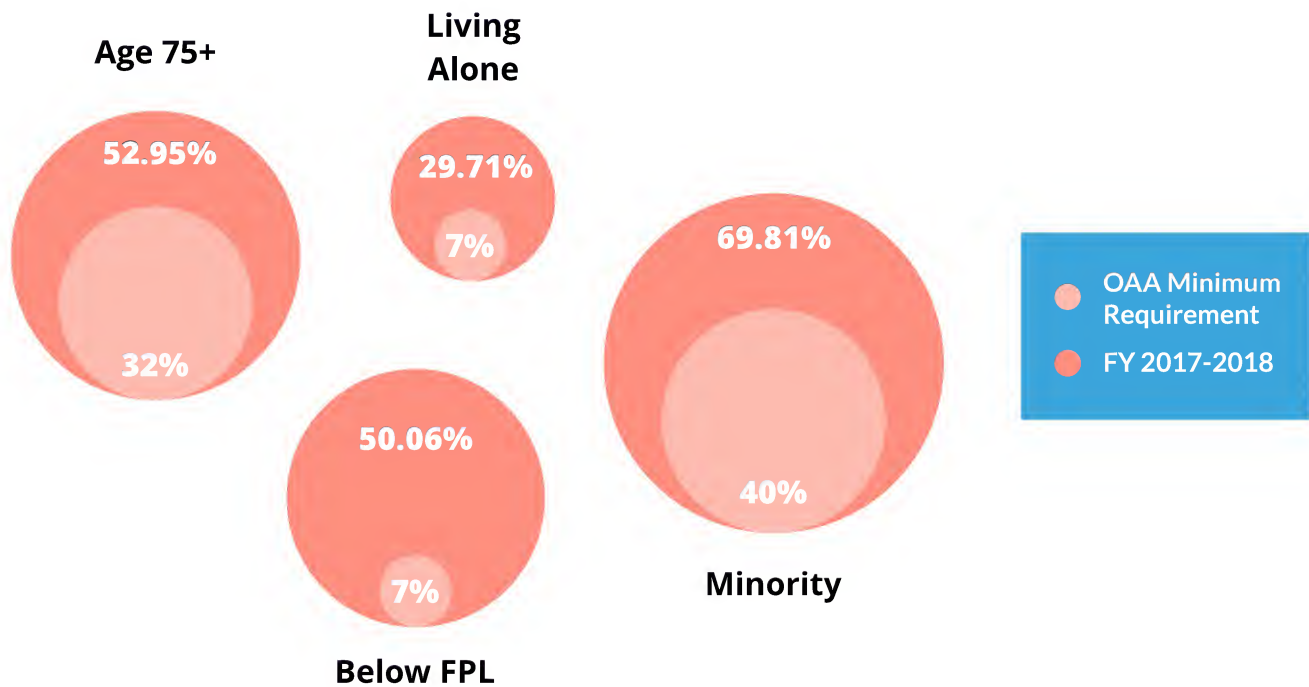
- Each meal provides 1/3 of the Dietary Reference Intakes for older adults
- Ethnically diverse menus
- Available seven days a week
- Provides social opportunities as well as access to exercise programs, classes, legal and financial services and more
- Transportation assistance available to eligible participants

### Meals on Wheels Program

- Meets 2/3 of the daily Dietary Reference Intakes for older adults
- 14 meals per week include: seven breakfasts, five frozen lunches/dinners, a fresh salad and a sandwich/wrap
- Yu-Ai Kai's Neighborhood Meals on Wheels prepares and delivers daily hot meals to the Japantown and Berryessa neighborhoods

## TARGET POPULATION

The Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) mandates the Senior Nutrition Program to provide nutrition services to all persons age 60 or older. In FY 2017-2018, the Senior Nutrition Program exceeded the targets in all areas.





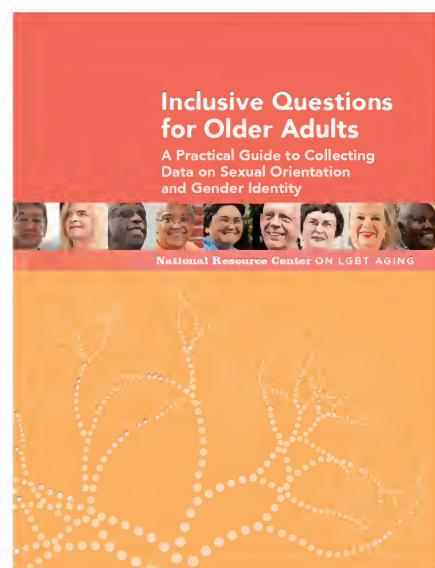
## CONGREGATE MEALS

The Congregate Meals Program offers nutritious and healthy lunches at 38 different nutrition sites throughout the County of Santa Clara. These lunches are either cooked on site or are catered by local restaurants or local food vendors and provide a third of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for an older adult. Most congregate meal programs are administered by CBOs and smaller groups run by cities. These meal sites allow older adults the opportunity to socialize with one another and access exercise programs, classes, and other activities at the site. The Congregate Meals Program is open to all older adults age 60 or over.

### Registration

In order to receive state and federal reimbursement, all eligible participants must register. Participants are required to complete a registration form that is available in several languages (English, Chinese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Portuguese, Japanese).

The forms were updated this year to reflect diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity for older adults. Site Managers were introduced to multiple ways in which to ask inclusive intake questions that take the various experiences around sexual orientation and gender identity into account.



*"Eating food here is better  
than having food at home."*

*- Congregate Meals  
Participant*

## CONGREGATE MEALS PARTICIPANT LETTER



*I am writing to tell you how very much I appreciate the staff of the Roosevelt Nutrition Program. The meals are excellent because the staff works to serve nutritious, delicious and attractive food. They each feel a responsibility to the seniors to make the best lunch possible. The menus are as diverse as are the participants. Although the cook, Nhat Le, successfully has included many items of Asian cuisine because most participants are from Asian countries, he has also supplied American and Mexican entrées. Good food is popular, no matter where one starts out in life. Nhat makes his own sauces and gravies and other items, or adds ingredients to those purchased, to get the freshest possible taste. I want Nhat to cook at Roosevelt until I can no longer be here.*

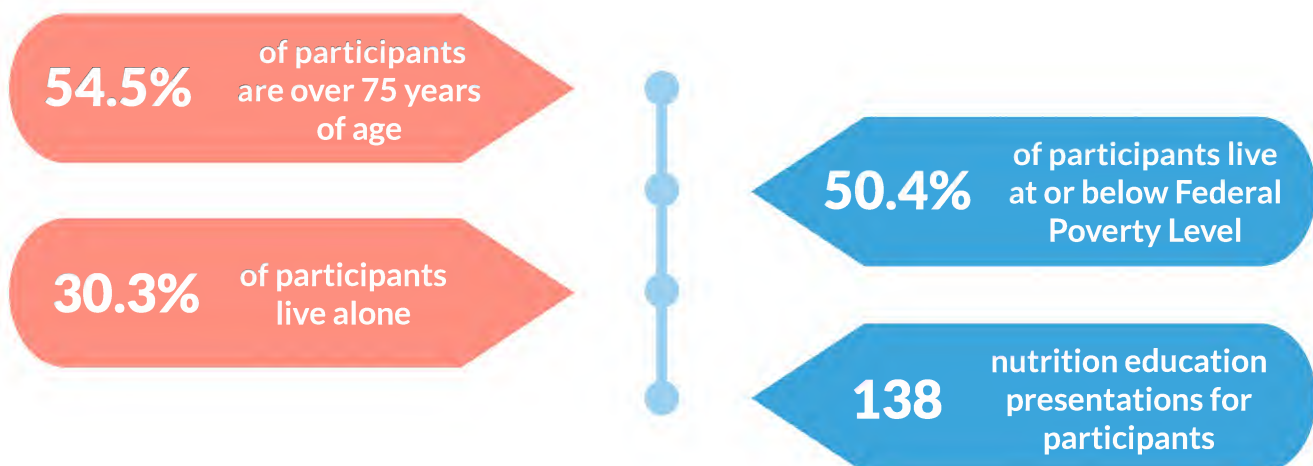
*The team is led by Bev Lukac. She is a hard worker with an easy-going style that fits well with her staff and volunteers. I am aware that Bev has many responsibilities but I think that her quick sense of humor speeds her day along. I appreciate a laugh with Bev, or even a smile. I am allergic to broccoli and, bless her heart, she remembers to substitute almost every time. She is my hero for saving me from broccoli and fish.*

*Stephanie Valencia, kitchen aide, under the instructions of Nhat, provides the alternative meals. I am familiar with the good quality of the alternative meals because I do not eat fish. Usually once a week, on fish day, I am given a choice of three entrées to choose as a substitute for fish. Each item I select, I feel confident that it will be attractive, delicious and nutritious because that's the care that Stephanie puts into the alternative meals.*

*I am aware that everyone does not fill out food surveys, but the comments to my sister and me as we come in to volunteer at the dances after lunch are very positive. These people don't have to say anything about food to us but they do because they truly enjoyed the lunch. Thank you for providing a skilled, caring and professional staff at Roosevelt Community Center Nutrition. It will be my pleasure to continue to avail myself of their services.*

Sincerely,  
Marolyn O'Neill

## CONGREGATE MEALS PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHTS





## CONGREGATE MEALS AND OLDER ADULTS SERVED

In FY 2017-2018, a total of **630,474** congregate meals were served to **12,815** unduplicated and eligible participants across 38 different nutrition sites in Santa Clara County.

### CBO Sites

AACI.....	6,855
Billy DeFrank.....	1,186
Cubberley.....	2,202
Eastside.....	34,256
Gilroy.....	23,789
ICC.....	8,242
John XXIII.....	38,227
KACS.....	10,816
La Comida/Stevenson House.....	33,926
Los Gatos & Villa Vasona.....	9,311
LOADS.....	1,472
Morgan Hill.....	19,021
Mountain View.....	32,591
Northside.....	19,652
POSSO.....	27,372
Salvation Army.....	28,754
SCVBC.....	1,996
Self-Help.....	14,924
Sunnyvale.....	31,584
Yu-Ai Kai.....	18,443
<b>Subtotal.....</b>	<b>364,619</b>

### City Sites

Campbell.....	13,715
Milpitas.....	17,099
Santa Clara.....	14,912
<b>Subtotal.....</b>	<b>45,726</b>

### City of San Jose Sites

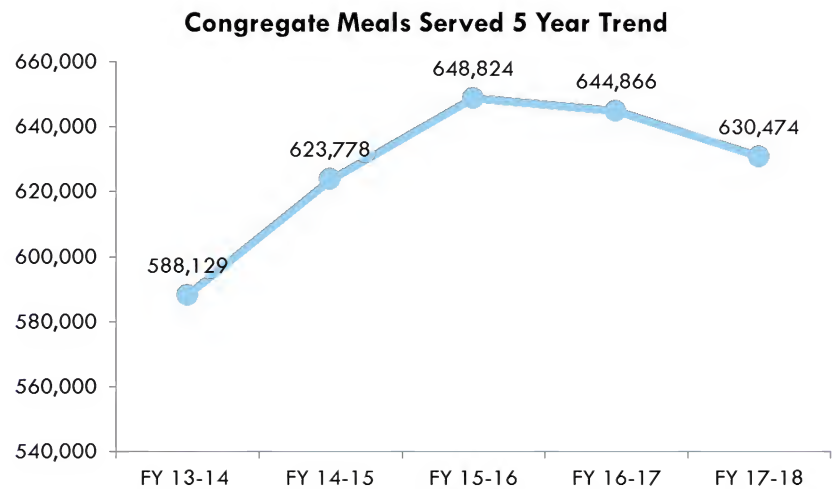
Alma.....	11,008
Almaden.....	14,496
Alviso.....	907
Berryessa.....	31,002
Camden.....	10,891
Cypress.....	15,289
Evergreen.....	23,790
Gardner.....	8,088
Mayfair.....	20,793
Roosevelt.....	30,344
Seven Trees.....	13,943
Southside.....	23,420
Willow Glen.....	16,158
<b>Subtotal.....</b>	<b>220,129</b>

### FY 2017-2018 Total Meals Served

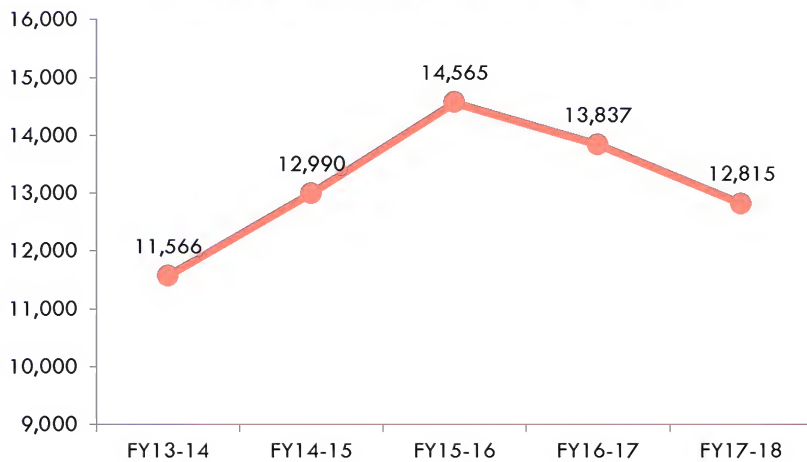
<b>Total.....</b>	<b>630,474</b>
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## PROGRAM TRENDS

There was a decrease of **14,392** congregate meals served to older adults in FY 2017-2018 (2.23% Decrease).



### Unduplicated Clients Served 5 Year Trend



There was a decrease of **1,022** unduplicated older adults served in FY 2017-2018. (7.39% Decrease).

*"You can't beat the price for the meal you get!"*  
- Congregate Meals Participant

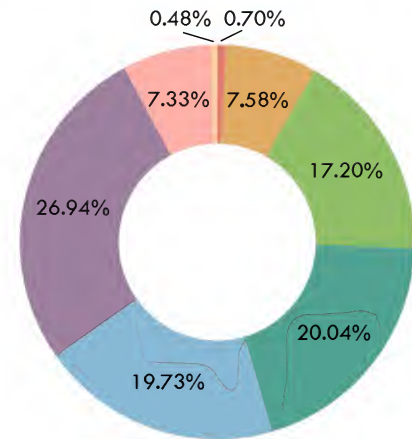


## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

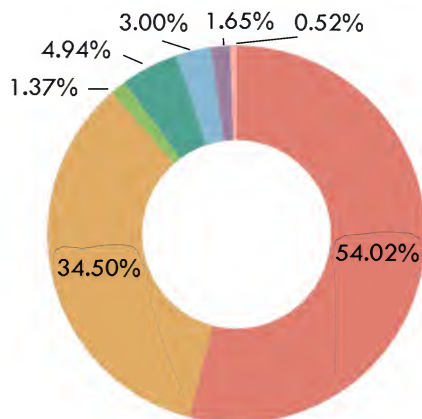
### Congregate Meals Participants by Age Range

Approximately **54.48%** of participants in the Congregate Meals Program are 75 years of age and older. This represents a **1.53%** increase from FY 2016-2017.

Age Range	Participants
0-59	90
60-64	971
65-69	2,204
70-74	2,568
75-79	2,529
80-89	3,453
90-99	939
100+	61



### Congregate Meals Participants by Race



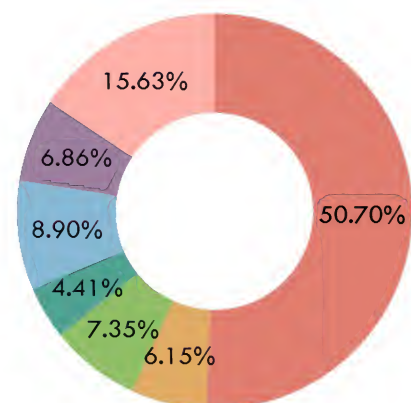
Race	Participants
Asian & Pacific Islander	6,923
White/Non-Hispanic	4,421
Hispanic/Latino	176
Declined to State	633
Other/Multiple Race	384
African Ancestry	211
American Indian or Alaskan Native	67

Asian participants (**54.02%**) were the largest demographic group that utilized the program. This represents a **1.79%** increase in Asian participants from FY 2016-2017.

### Congregate Meals Participants (Asian)

Participants of **Chinese descent** were the largest sub-group, making up **50.70%** of the Asian demographic. This is unchanged from FY 2016-2017.

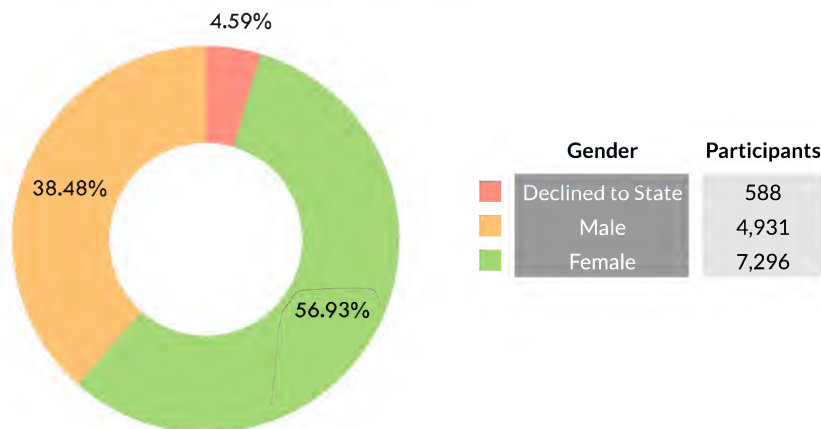
Asian Sub-group	Participants
Chinese	3,510
Filipino	426
Japanese	509
Korean	305
Other Asian	616
Other Pacific Islander	475
Vietnamese	1,082





## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

### Congregate Meals Participants by Gender



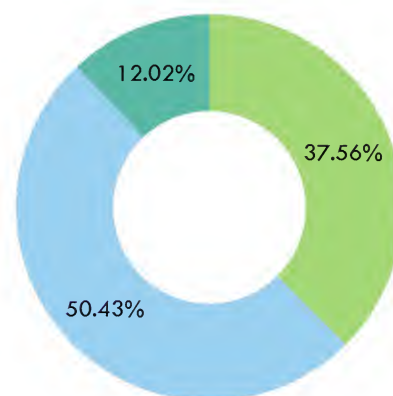
Of the **12,815** older adults participating in the Congregate Meals Program in FY 2017-2018, **56.93%** were female and **38.48%** were male.

Approximately **50.43%** of Congregate Meals Program Participants live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

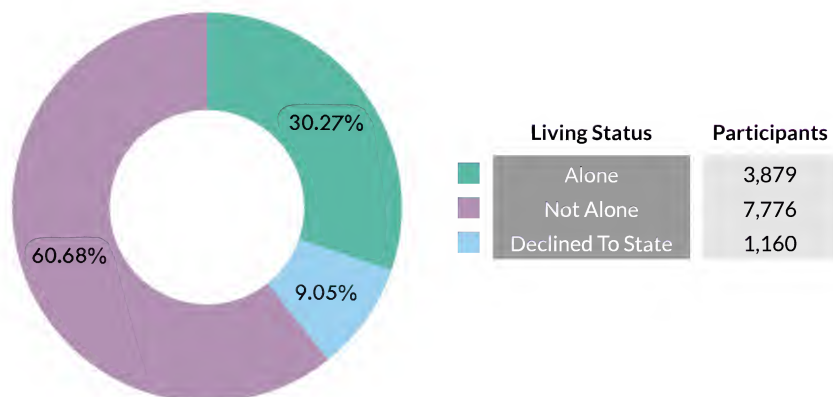
*For 2017, the FPL for a household of one (1) person was \$12,060 annually or \$1,005.00 monthly.*

FPL Status	Participants
Above 100% FPL	4,813
At or below 100% FPL	6,462
Declined To State	1,540

### Congregate Meals Participants by FPL



### Congregate Meals Participants by Living Status



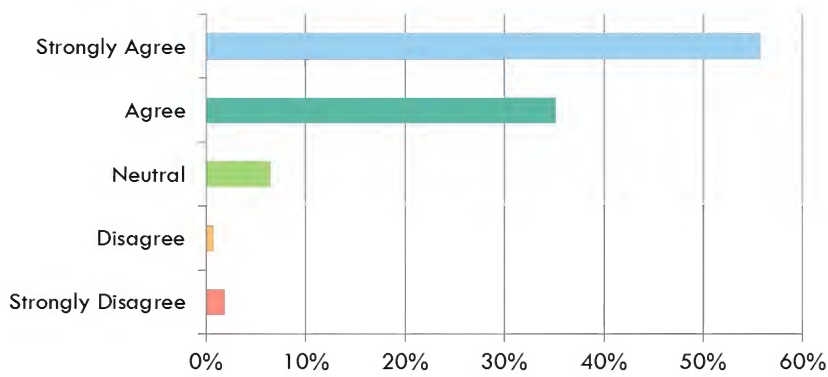
Approximately **30.27%** of Congregate Meals Participants live alone.

## CONGREGATE MEALS PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

In FY 2017-2018, with the assistance of the Office of Research and Evaluation, SNP redesigned Participant Surveys in order to measure participant outcomes. The results of this survey will be utilized to create baseline measures and engagement strategies to optimize the program's services in subsequent years. There were over 2000 surveys collected.

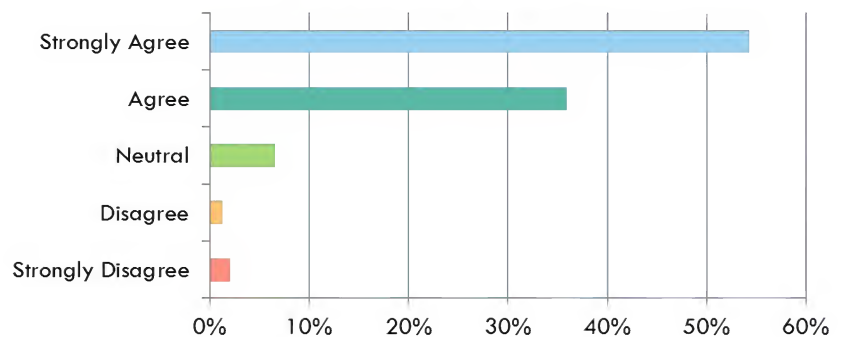
**68.4%** of Congregate Meals participants indicate that the reason they enjoy going to nutrition sites is to see friends and socialize. **62.4%** of participants indicate that they enjoy going to nutrition sites for food.

### Senior Nutrition Program helps me to stay healthy.



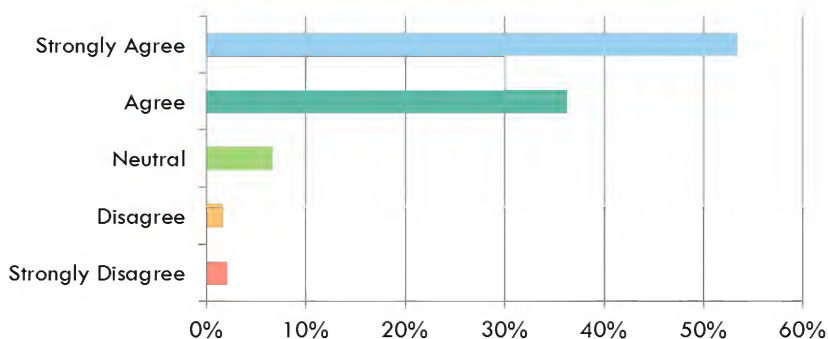
**90.9%** of participants agree or strongly agree that SNP helps them to stay healthy.

### Socialization at the meal site helps me to maintain my overall health.



**90.2%** of participants agree or strongly agree that socializing at congregate meal sites helps them to maintain their overall health.

### Overall, I am satisfied with the meals provided by the Senior Nutrition Program.



**89.6%** of participants agree or strongly agree that they are satisfied with meals provided by SNP.



## MEALS ON WHEELS

The Home-Delivered Meals Program (Meals on Wheels) delivers meals to homebound, isolated older adults throughout the County of Santa Clara. These individuals are homebound, age 60 or older, have difficulty obtaining food for themselves, and are either frail, disabled, or recovering from an illness. 58% of the participants we serve are women. The Senior Nutrition Program offers two home-delivered meals options:

### **Santa Clara County Meals on Wheels**

Through a contract with Bateman Community Living, the Meals on Wheels Program provides qualifying older adults with a weekly delivery of 14 meals (five frozen lunch/dinner entrées, a salad entrée, a sandwich or wrap, and seven breakfasts) supplemented with milk, bread, juice, and other grocery items.

### **Yu-Ai Kai's Neighborhood Meals on Wheels**

Yu-Ai Kai's Neighborhood Meals on Wheels program provides eligible older adults in the Japantown and Berryessa areas with a daily hot meal.

The Meals on Wheels (MOW) Program is a valued safety-net program for many older adults in our community; it allows homebound older adults to maintain their independence and increases their ability to remain in their homes.

*"I appreciate the MOW program very much. It enables me to continue living in my home. I am 86 years old, housebound, cannot walk and am on a limited income like so many others. Your program is truly Godsend. Thank you!" - MOW Participant*



## PARTICIPANT PROFILE



Born in Indiana, Bob moved to Southern California after high school. He has always been a music lover and enjoys singing songs from the 20s to 70s. He is especially inspired by Nat King Cole, Tony Bennett, and Frank Sinatra. Bob sings every day and competes in singing competitions in Las Vegas when he is able to. According to Bob, he recently competed with one of the top 10 American Idol contestants. He says, "I can sing better than three-fourths of the people that were there."

Eight years ago, Bob started losing his eye sight and is now legally blind. Since then, it has been a challenge to cook. He says, "I often burn myself." As such, Bob is grateful for MOW since food is delivered directly to his home. Besides the food, Bob appreciates the service from MOW driver Cindy. She is friendly and courteous, asking about his health when she delivers his meals. Once, when Cindy was unable to locate Bob in his home, she called the police. He felt good knowing that people care.

### Meal Breakdown

In FY 2017-2018, a total of **688,022** Home-Delivered Meals were served to **1,661** unduplicated older adults.

Home-Delivered Option	Meals Served	Clients
Santa Clara County Meals on Wheels	674,302	1,596
Yu-Ai Kai's Neighborhood Meals on Wheels	8,720	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>688,022</b>	<b>1,661</b>

### MOW PARTICIPANT HIGHLIGHTS

**48%**

of participants are  
over 80 years  
of age

**57.6%**

of participants  
live alone

**79.2%**

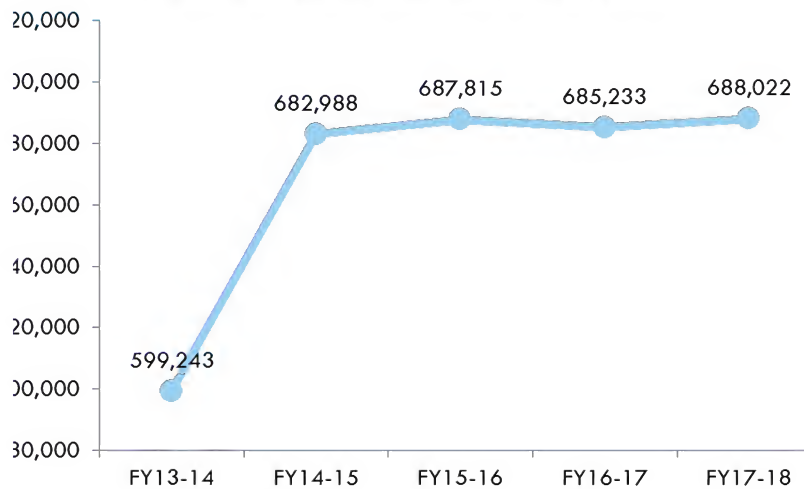
of participants  
live at or below  
Federal Poverty  
Level

**2,850**

emergency  
meals  
distributed to  
participants

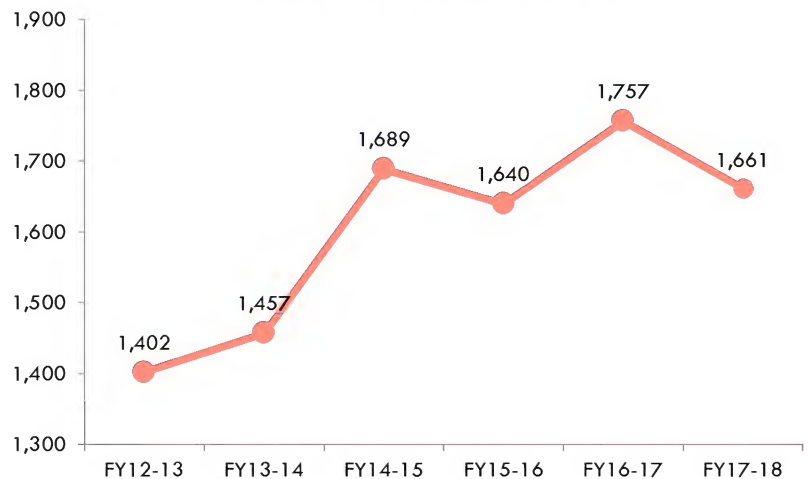
## PROGRAM TRENDS

**Meals on Wheels Served 5 Year Trend**



There was an increase of **2,789 meals served** to older adults in FY 2017-2018. (0.41% Increase)

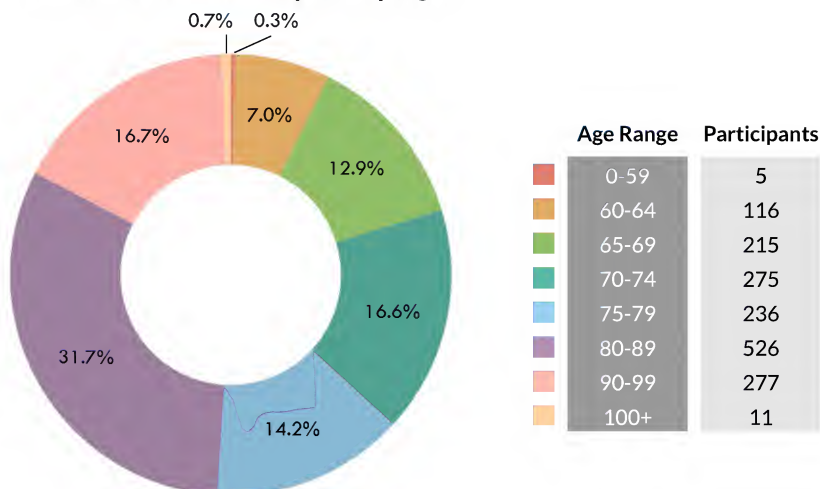
**Unduplicated Clients Served 5 Year Trend**



There was a decrease of **96 unduplicated older adults served** in FY 2017-2018. (5.46% Decrease)

## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

**Meals on Wheels Participants by Age**



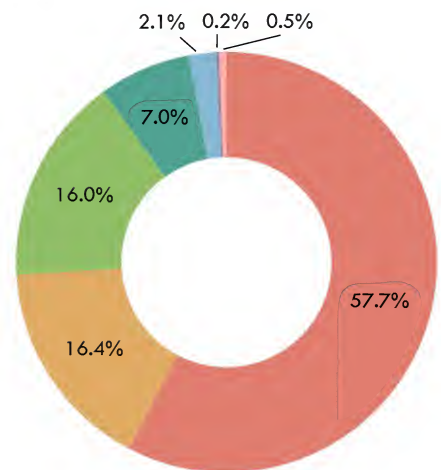
The largest age group participating in the Meals on Wheels Program is in the **80 – 89 Age Group** with **526 participants** (approximately 31.7%).

## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

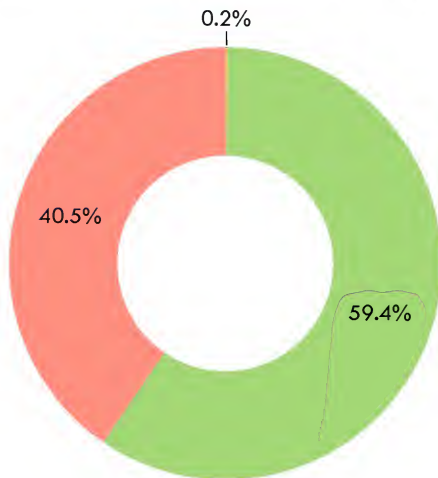
The Meals on Wheels program provides meals to a diverse group of homebound older adults.

Race	Participants
White/Non-Hispanic	958
Asian	272
Hispanic/Latino	266
African Ancestry	117
Other/Multiple Race	35
Declined to State	4
American Indian or Alaskan Native	9

Meal on Wheels Participants by Race



Meals on Wheels Participants by Gender



Gender	Participants
Declined to State	3
Male	672
Female	986

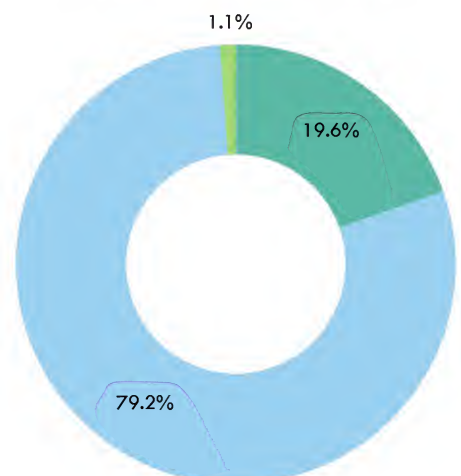
Of the 1,756 older adults participating in the Meals on Wheels Program in FY 2017-2018, **57.92%** were female and **39.18%** were male.

About **79.2%** of Meals on Wheels Participants live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). This represents a **4.3% increase** from FY 2016-2017.

For 2017, the FPL for a household of one (1) person was \$12,060.00 annually or \$1005.00 monthly.

FPL Status	Participants
Above 100% FPL	326
At or below 100% FPL	1,316
Declined To State	19

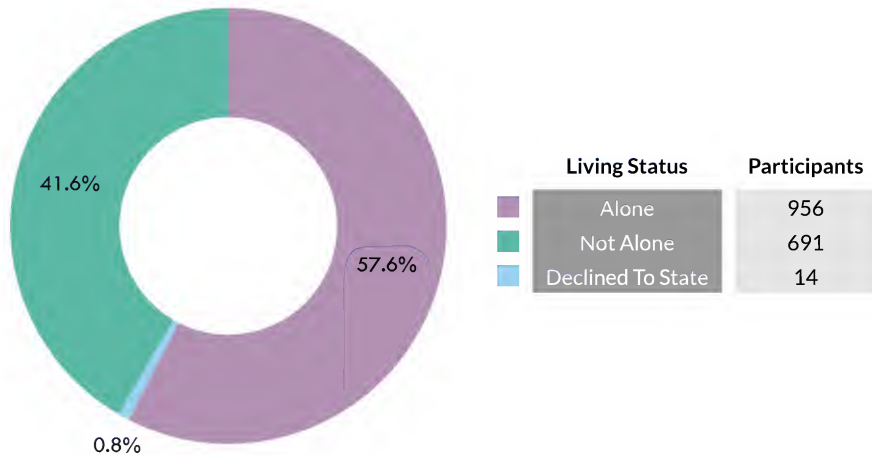
Meals on Wheels Participants by FPL





## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

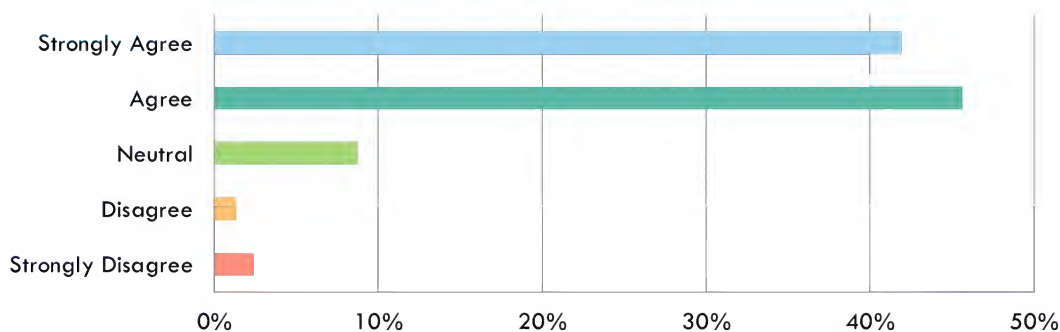
### Meals on Wheels Participants by Living Status



About **57.6%** of Meals on Wheels Participants live alone. This represents a **5.3% increase** from FY 2016-2017.

## MOW PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION SURVEY

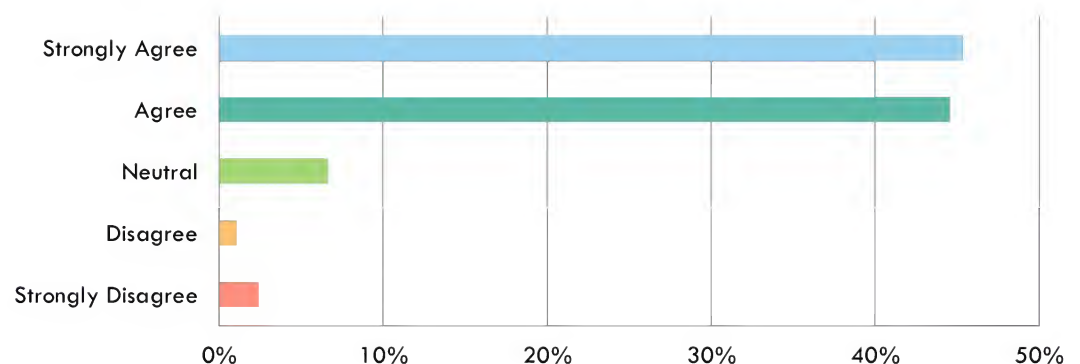
### The meals provided by the MOW Program help me to maintain my overall health.



**89.9%** of MOW participants agree or strongly agree that meals provided by MOW help them maintain their overall health.

### The MOW Program has assisted me in maintaining my independence.

**89.9%** of MOW participants agree or strongly agree that the MOW program helps them maintain their independence.



## FRIENDS FROM MEALS ON WHEELS

The Friends from Meals on Wheels Program (FMOW) was implemented on April 1, 2016. The goal of FMOW is to increase socialization for the County of Santa Clara's isolated and homebound older adults. The Senior Nutrition Program, in collaboration with The Health Trust, is working to ensure the frailest and eldest adults in Santa Clara County are receiving services that increase their physical and mental health, happiness, and quality of life. The Health Trust is adopting a new social isolation tool that will help it track its participant's outcomes more effectively. Additionally, it is expanding the evidence-based programs used for its exercise visits to better meet client needs.

Activities provided to FMOW participants include:

- initial home-visit assessments,
- subsequent home-visits,
- telephone calls,
- exercise home-visits or telephone calls,
- pet food deliveries, and
- birthday card and gift deliveries.

### PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

**123**  
unduplicated  
older adults  
served

**61%**  
of participants  
live alone

**329**  
pet food bags  
delivered

**67%**  
of  
participants  
are older  
than 75 years  
of age



## MOBILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



SNP Administration provides coordination, verification, and distribution of mobility options (gas cards and bus passes) to eligible SNP participants and provides paratransit rides through a partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) so that SNP participants with transportation barriers can attend nutrition sites.

### Senior Nutrition Transportation Services

SNP Administration distributed a total of **8,731** benefits (gas cards and bus passes) and reimbursed VTA for providing a total of **16,475** paratransit rides to nutrition program participants in FY 2017-2018.



**8731**  
gas cards and  
bus passes

**16,475**  
paratransit  
rides



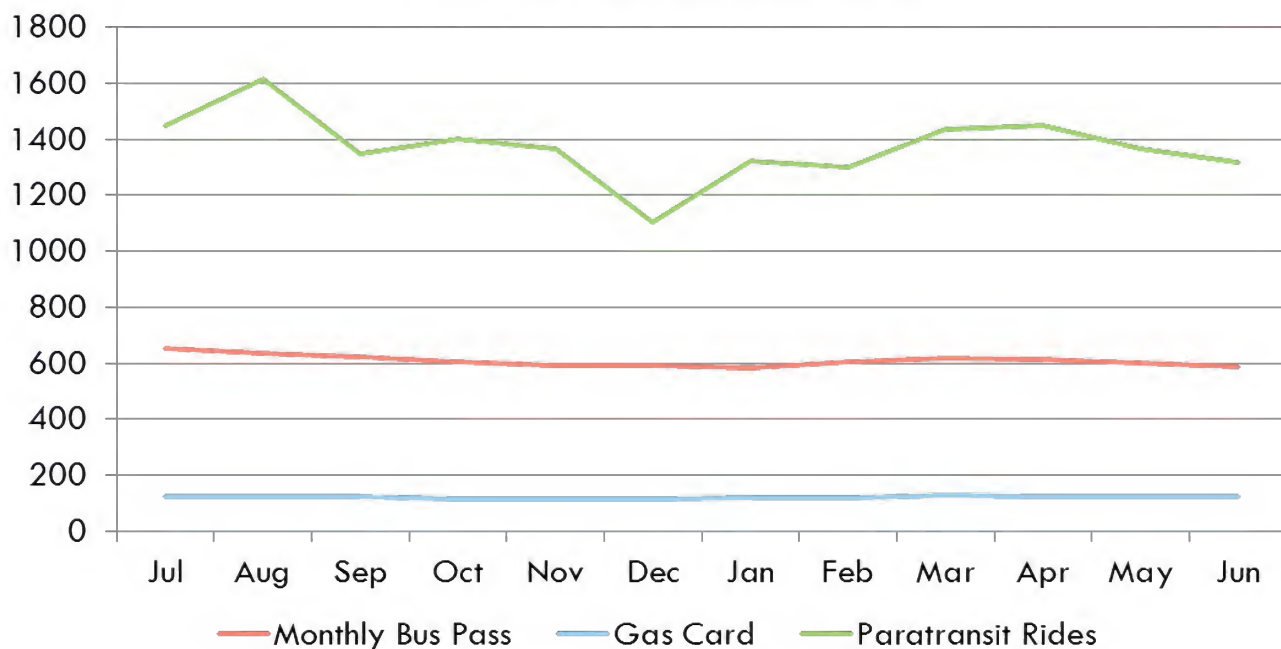




## Eligibility & Service Trends

In order to receive transportation benefits, a participant must submit a Mobility Management Program Registration Form and attend lunch at the home site at least 8 times per month.

### FY 2017-2018 Senior Nutrition Transportation Service Trend



## PROGRAM COSTS

### SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM EXPENDITURES

In FY 2017-2018, the Senior Nutrition Program expended **\$9,137,782**.

Of the \$9,137,7823 expended by the Senior Nutrition Program, \$359,587 was utilized for transportation services through the Mobility Management Program (exclusively funded from the County General fund), \$154,500 went towards funding the Friends from Meals on Wheels Program, and \$7,229,849 funded nutrition services through the Congregate Meals Program and Meals on Wheels Program. An inventory item fund was awarded by the Board of Supervisors to pilot a meal site at Viet Tu Te. \$10,279 was spent towards the purchase of kitchen equipment for this site.

#### Expenditures

Congregate Meals.....	\$5,039,570
Administrative.....	\$1,383,567
Mobility Management .....	\$359,587
Meals on Wheels.....	\$2,190,279
Friends from Meals on Wheels.....	\$154,500
Inventory Item (Viet Tu Te).....	\$10,279
<b>Total Expenditures.....</b>	<b>\$9,137,782</b>

#### Funding Sources

NSIP.....	\$999,014
Title III (Federal) .....	\$1,455,581
Title III (State) .....	\$325,169
Contributions.....	\$748,193
County General Fund.....	\$5,599,546
<b>Total Funds.....</b>	<b>\$9,127,503</b>

### Federal and State Funding

SNP receives funding from the Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) Title III Funds and Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) Funds. Each year, the California Department on Aging allocates OAA and NSIP funds across the 33 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) within California. The AAAs then disburse the funds within their local jurisdiction toward a variety of older adult services including older adult work programs, supportive services, nutrition services, etc. Sourcewise is the designated AAA for the County of Santa Clara.

In addition to federal and state funding, the County General Fund is appropriated to the SNP to allow a greater number of participants the ability to attend lunches at nutrition sites or to receive MOW. We thank the Board of Supervisors for their unrelenting support of our program.

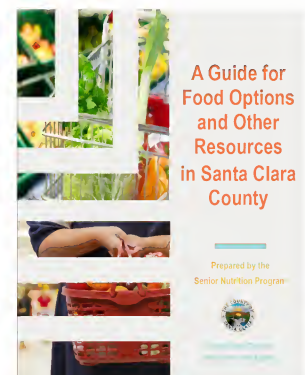
## PARTNERSHIPS

### Volunteers

Volunteers are an indispensable part of every congregate meal program. They are a tremendous resource that builds service capacity at congregate meal sites. The Senior Nutrition Program is grateful for the dedication of volunteers.

### San Jose State University (SJSU) Work Study Program

The Federal Work Study Program from SJSU provides the Senior Nutrition Program with student assistants to assist with office projects. Students gain workplace experience while continuing their education at SJSU. "A Guide for Food Options" was created by a work study student and approved for distribution by the staff of SNP.



### San Jose State University Dietetic Internship Program

In Fall 2017, the SNP accepted and trained its first Food Service Management intern, Nancy Liu, from the San Jose State Dietetic Internship Program. Nancy had the opportunity to work alongside SNP registered dietitians and site managers located at the Congregate Meals sites. She was educated on the roles and responsibilities of a registered dietitian. She completed all required Food Service competencies and provided more than 20 PowerPoint presentations on Nutrition and Food Safety to older adults. One project she completed was the creation of the program's "Guidelines for New Senior Nutrition Sites." This guideline will be used for evaluating new programs. A poster version of the guideline was presented at SJSU. It is a privilege for SNP to train future dietitians.





### **Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB)**

SNP partners with Second Harvest Food Bank to provide free access to bulk food to reduce raw food costs. Congregate sites picked up 84,549 pounds of food produce at SHFB, saving an estimated \$125,391.35. (84,549 x SHFB designated value of \$1.68/lb)

### **SNP staff gives back to the community**

On November 20th, 2017, the staff of SNP volunteered time at the SHFB. Volunteers sorted bread into boxes to be distributed on Thanksgiving day. On December 15, 2017, the staff of SNP served lunch to the older adults at Gilroy Senior Café. This holiday luncheon was well-attended and the staff had a chance to interact and dine with the older adults at the center.



### **Department of Employment and Benefit Services**

SNP partnered with CalFresh to enroll more older adults through the Elderly Simplified Application Process. Education was provided to our partners to increase awareness regarding the revised annual recertification process.

### **Rebuilding Together**

SNP collaborated with Rebuilding Together to repair the homes and rebuild the lives of participants in our Meals on Wheels program. Projects included bathroom and roof repairs at no cost to the eligible older adult.

### **Public Health Department**

SNP partnered with PHD to increase awareness about the Market Match Program and farmers market vouchers. Training was provided to site managers and vouchers were distributed at various meal sites. The dietitians at SNP collaborated with the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention program to spread unified messages on Health and Disease prevention including, but not limited to, Diabetes Prevention.

## HARVEY ROSE AUDIT REVIEW

On February 25, 2015, the Management Audit Division of the Board of Supervisors (Harvey Rose) presented the Management Audit of the Senior Nutrition Program to the Finance and Government Operations Committee. The Senior Nutrition Program has successfully implemented several of the Harvey Rose recommendations since the release of the Management Audit Report. Progress on the remaining recommendations are as follows:

### Section 5. Distribution of Meal Sites Relative to Distribution of Low-Income Seniors

Section	Harvey Rose Recommendation	Agency Update
5.1	Examine options for providing at least lunchtime service of salads and sandwiches in the George Shirakawa Community Center or other appropriate site within ZIP Code 95122 to reach this area's many low-income seniors. (Priority 1)	Opened a new site (Viet Tu Te) in ZIP code 95122 to provide meals to the older adults in that community.
5.2	Examine options for providing congregate meal services in ZIP codes 95127, 95121, 95133, 95118, 95131, 95051, and 95136, with the goal of expanding the reach of daily congregate meals to the neighborhoods of 80 percent of the County's low-income seniors. (Priority 1)	In Progress.
5.3	Establish a goal to provide congregate meals within the ZIP codes of the County's low-income seniors' residences.	In Progress.

## FUTURE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### **Meal Reimbursement Rates**

SNP's reimbursement rates have remained relatively flat since 2012, increasing anywhere from 5-12% for all food access programs. According to the Administration on Community Living Older Americans Act Nutrition Program Evaluation: Meal Cost Analysis report released September 2015, the average, weighted cost by the program was \$10.69 for a congregate meal and \$11.06 for a home-delivered meal. When you look at figures by geographic region, the disparity in reimbursement is exacerbated. For the Western region, the average weighted cost for congregate and home-delivered meals was \$12.13 and \$14.32, respectively. Our current reimbursement rates for congregate and home-delivered meals are \$8.43 and \$9.57, respectively. The current reimbursement rate model is not sustainable for our non-profit providers and may, ultimately, lead to organizations opting out of participation in the SNP.



**Recommendation:** Per meal reimbursement rates for congregate meals are low. Our providers are shouldering a large portion of the program costs and this may not be sustainable. Cook-on-site meal rates should be brought up to a rate at least equal to the catered meal rate of \$9.57.

### **Innovative Programs to Close the Food Access Gaps**

SNP has been providing food access through two programs: the congregate and home-delivered meals programs. The face of our County's older adult population, along with their needs, are changing. In September 2016, Change Helpers, a consultant hired by SNP, published a Review and Recommendations Report for the congregate meals RFP released in November 2017. It identified a number of innovative programs it called "Best ideas" that did not exist in the County, but which could be adopted, including a restaurant meals voucher program. Along this vein, the County will be partnering with The Health Trust to implement a restaurant voucher pilot program with the ultimate goal of closing food access gaps in areas considered food deserts and attracting clients that do not access traditional congregate meal programs. This last year, SNP experienced a 7.39% drop in congregate meal participation, yet poverty in the older adult population is increasing.

**Recommendation:** Design and develop a restaurant voucher meal program business plan for the County of Santa Clara.



### **Reliable, Consistent, and Cost Effective Data Collection**

The SNP has been using data collection software that is managed by a third party through an off-site platform. Management, reliability, and need for real time data have been recurring issues with this platform. In addition, the program is looking to collect outcomes focused data that remains difficult with the current platform's inconsistencies and inability to produce live data.

**Recommendation:** Create and implement a user-friendly database that would replace the labor intensive system that is currently in place. This system would better meet the needs of our program in capturing big data and the needs of community based organization service providers.

*“Thank you so much for the great meals. They sure helped us a lot. You are doing a wonderful service for a lot of people” - MOW Participant*

